

CLAIMS

1. A content data reproduction apparatus for reproducing content data, said content data reproduction apparatus comprising:

transmission means for transmitting to registration confirmation apparatus a confirmation request signal which requests the registration confirmation apparatus to confirm whether or not said content data reproduction apparatus or a user has been registered;

reception means for receiving from said registration confirmation apparatus a registration confirmation signal which informs that said content data reproduction apparatus or said user has been registered;

storage means for storing content data acquired from content data provision apparatus, said content data provision apparatus providing said content data which is prohibited from being stored in an external section;

setting means for setting said content data stored in said storage means to reproducible when said reception means receives said registration confirmation signal; and

reproduction means for reproducing said content data when a reproduction command for said content data is input via an input means while said content data is being set to reproducible by said setting means.

2. The content data reproduction apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when an operation to purchase said content data which is associated with attribute information informing that said content

data is prohibited from being stored in an external device is performed, said content data reproduction apparatus transmits to a content data sales apparatus a purchase notification signal which notifies said content data sales apparatus of an intention to purchase said content data, and then when receiving from said content data sales apparatus a sale notification signal which notifies said content data reproduction apparatus that a sale of said content data is completed, said content data reproduction apparatus changes said attribute information of said content data such that said attribute information informs that said content data is allowed to be stored in an external section.

3. The content data reproduction apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said attribute information informing that said content data is allowed to be stored in an external section shows permission of outputting said content data to an external section as if said content data is lent out, or permission of outputting said content data to an external section as well as deleting said content data from said storage means.

4. The content data reproduction apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said transmission means transmits said confirmation request signal to said registration confirmation apparatus each time when said content data reproduction apparatus is powered on.

5. The content data reproduction apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising readout means for reading out said content data from a storage medium, wherein said storage means stores said

content data read by said readout means.

6 The content data reproduction apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said content data provided from said content data provision apparatus is associated with attribute information informing that said content data is prohibited from being output to an external section.

7. The content data reproduction apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising:

output means for outputting content data to an external section; and

output control means for controlling said output means such that said content data is not output when the attribute information of said content data informs that the outputting of said content data is prohibited.

8. A registration confirmation apparatus comprising:

reception means for receiving from content data reproduction apparatus a confirmation request signal which requests said registration confirmation apparatus to confirm whether or not said content data reproduction apparatus or a user has been registered, said content data reproduction apparatus capable of reproducing content data;

first storage means for storing apparatus identification information identifying said content data reproduction apparatus or user identification information identifying said user, along with payment status information showing payment status of said

content data reproduction apparatus or said user;

determination means for checking said first storage means based on said apparatus identification information or said user identification information shown by the received confirmation request signal to determine whether or not said content data reproduction apparatus or said user has been properly charged; and

transmission means for transmitting to said content data reproduction apparatus a registration confirmation signal which informs that said content data reproduction apparatus or said user has been registered, in response to the determination result of said determination means.

9. The registration confirmation apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising:

second storage means for storing content data; and

content data transmission means for transmitting to said content data reproduction apparatus said content data stored in said second storage means, in response to a request from said content data reproduction apparatus.

10. The registration confirmation apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said content data transmission means transmits to said content data reproduction apparatus said content data which is prohibited from being stored from said content data reproduction apparatus to an external section.

11. A content data reproduction method of content data reproduction apparatus for reproducing content data, said content

data reproduction method comprising:

a first step of transmitting to registration confirmation apparatus a confirmation request signal which requests the registration confirmation apparatus to confirm whether or not said content data reproduction apparatus or a user has been registered;

a second step of receiving from said registration confirmation apparatus a registration confirmation signal which informs that said content data reproduction apparatus or said user has been registered;

a third step of storing in a storage means content data acquired from content data provision apparatus, said content data provision apparatus providing said content data which is prohibited from being stored in an external section;

a fourth step of setting said content data stored in said storage means to reproducible when said registration confirmation signal is received from said registration confirmation apparatus; and

a fifth step of reproducing said content data when a reproduction command for said content data is input via an input means while said content data is being set to reproducible.

12. A registration confirmation method of registration confirmation apparatus, said registration confirmation method comprising:

a first step of receiving from content data reproduction apparatus a confirmation request signal which requests to confirm whether or not said content data reproduction apparatus or a user has been registered, said content data reproduction apparatus

capable of reproducing content data;

a second step of determining whether or not said content data reproduction apparatus or said user has been properly charged by checking a storage means based on apparatus identification information identifying said content data reproduction apparatus or user identification information identifying said user shown in the received confirmation request signal, said storage means storing said apparatus identification information or said user identification information along with payment status information showing payment status of said content data reproduction apparatus or said user; and

a third step of transmitting to said content data reproduction apparatus a registration confirmation signal which informs that said content data reproduction apparatus or said user has been registered, in response to the determination result of said second step.

13. A content data reproduction program for causing content data reproduction apparatus which reproduces content data to execute:

a first step of transmitting to registration confirmation apparatus a confirmation request signal which requests the registration confirmation apparatus to confirm whether or not said content data reproduction apparatus or a user has been registered;

a second step of receiving from said registration confirmation apparatus a registration confirmation signal which informs that said content data reproduction apparatus or said user has been registered;

a third step of storing in a storage means content data

acquired from content data provision apparatus, said content data provision apparatus providing said content data which is prohibited from being stored in an external section;

a fourth step of setting said content data stored in said storage means to reproducible when said registration confirmation signal is received from said registration confirmation apparatus; and

a fifth step of reproducing said content data when a reproduction command for said content data is input via an input means while said content data is being set to reproducible.

14. A registration confirmation program for causing a computer to execute:

a first step of receiving from content data reproduction apparatus a confirmation request signal which requests to confirm whether or not said content data reproduction apparatus or a user has been registered, said content data reproduction apparatus capable of reproducing content data;

a second step of determining whether or not said content data reproduction apparatus or said user has been properly charged by checking a storage means based on apparatus identification information identifying said content data reproduction apparatus or user identification information identifying said user shown in the received confirmation request signal, said storage means storing said apparatus identification information or said user identification information along with payment status information showing payment status of said content data reproduction apparatus or said user; and

a third step of transmitting to said content data reproduction apparatus a registration confirmation signal which informs that said content data reproduction apparatus or said user has been registered, in response to the determination result of said second step.